

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 MFLO-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15

ICA-11 TRSE-00 IO-13 /082 W

-----009692 150124Z /75

R 131126Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO AMEMBASSY RHTDZX

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 1815

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PINR, TS, TC, MR

SUBJ: TUNISIA NAMES ARAB WORLD'S FIRST WOMAN CAREER AMBASSADOR

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. THE SENEGALESE GOVERNMENT HAS GIVEN AGREEMENT TO THE NOMINATION OF MME. FAIKA FAROUK AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY TO THE REPUBLIC OF SENEGAL WITH CONCURRENT ACCREDITATION TO MAURITANIA. EMBASSY UNAWARE OF ANY OTHER WOMAN CAREER DIPLOMAT IN THE ARAB WORLD HAVING REACHED THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR. TUNISIAN GOVERNMENT TELLS US THAT THIS IS ALSO THEIR UNDERSTANDING, ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN ARAB WOMEN AMBASSADORS WHO WERE POLITICAL APPOINTEES OR MEMBERS OF A ROYAL FAMILY.

2. CAREER MILESTONES: PRESENTLY DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE TO THE UNITED NATIONS, MME, FAROUK ENTERED THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE IN 1957. FIRST ASSIGNED TO WASHINGTON, THEN TO LONDON AS CULTURAL ATTACHE IN 1960. SHE ASSUMED SEVERAL FUNCTIONS IN THE FOREIGN MINISTRY

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SUCCESSIVELY AS CHIEF OF THE PRESS AND DOCUMENTATION DIVISION, THE CULTURAL AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE DIVISION, THE AMERICAN DESK, AND THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES DIVISION. FROM 1969 TO 1971, SHE WAS DETACHED TO THE ALI BACH HAMBA INSTITUTE, A TRAINING FACILITY FOR JOURNALISTS ESTABLISHED BY THE FRIEDRICH EBERT FOUNDATION OF GERMANY.

PROMOTED TO COUNSELOR OF EMBASSY IN 1966, AND TO MINISTER IN 1971, SHE WAS APPOINTED DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE EUROPEAN-AMERICAN DIVISION OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY IN JANUARY 1976 BEFORE JOINING THE UN IN NEW YORK AS TUNISIAN DEPUTY REPRESENTATIVE IN 1977. SHE HAS PARTICIPATED IN TEN UNGA'S IN NEW YORK AND IN SEVERAL SPECIALIZED COMMISSIONS BETWEEN 1957 AND 1977. SHE HAS ALSO REPRESENTED TUNISIA AT VARIOUS SESSIONS OF UNESCO AND OF THE COMMISSION FOR THE RIGHTS OF MAN IN NEW YORK AND IN GENEVA.

3. PERSONAL: BORN IN PARIS ON FEBRUARY 15, 1929, SHE GRADUATED IN ENGLISH LETTERS AND TOOK A DEGREE IN POLITICAL SCIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PARIS, WHERE SHE BECAME, IN 1956, PRESIDENT OF THE FIRST ASSOCIATION OF TUNISIAN STUDENTS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE. BESIDES HER DIPLOMATIC FUNCTIONS, SHE WAS FROM 1969 TO 1972 A MEMBER OF THE TUNIS TOWN COUNCIL. SHE REPRESENTED THE TUNISIAN WOMEN'S NATIONAL UNION AT VARIOUS CONGRESSES AND CONFERENCES IN EUROPE, THE UNITED STATES, AFRICA, AND LATIN AMERICA. FAIKA FAROUK IS UNMARRIED. SHE SPEAKS EXCELLENT ENGLISH AS WELL AS FRENCH AND ARABIC.
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4. MME. FAROUK IS EXTREMELY WELL-DISPOSED TOWARDS THE U.S. WITH HER OUTGOING MANNER AND COLLOQUIAL AMERICAN ENGLISH, WE HAVE FOUND IT VERY EASY TO ESTABLISH GOOD PROFESSIONAL RELATIONS WITH HER. ONE WORD OF CAUTION: WHEN ISSUES ARE INVOLVED ON WHICH THE TUNISIAN AND AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS DO NOT SEE EYE TO EYE, MME. AROUK IS INCLINED, AS ARE MANY TUNISIANS, TO AVOID COMING TO GRIPS WITH THESE DIFFERENCES. SHE IS RATHER SKILLFUL AT CONFUSING AN ISSUE IN ORDER TO AVOID UNPLEASANTNESS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARAB STATES, PERSONNEL APPOINTMENTS, AMBASSADORS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 13 jul 1978
Decapton Date: 01 jan 1960
Decapton Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TUNIS05003
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780290-0077
Format: TEL
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780761/aaaabzxc.tel
Line Count: 105
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 3c209e73-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2013438
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TUNISIA NAMES ARAB WORLD'S FIRST WOMAN CAREER AMBASSADOR BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED
TAGS: PINR, TS, TC, MR, SG, (FAROUK, FAIKA)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/3c209e73-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014